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Statement by the President of the Security Council

At the 5041st meeting of the Security Council, held on 22 September 2004, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "Civilian aspects of conflict management and peace building", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council met at ministerial level on 22 September 2004 to consider 'Civilian Aspects of Conflict Management and Peace Building'. Ministers recognized the increasing importance of civilian aspects of conflict management in addressing complex crisis situations and in preventing the recurrence of conflict. They affirmed the importance of conflict resolution in accordance with the relevant provisions of the United Nations Charter.

"Ministers also acknowledged the importance of civilian-military cooperation in crisis management. Military and police components are essential to address and stabilize certain serious crisis situations and to guarantee security. Moreover, the participation of a strong civilian component is key to the provision of humanitarian assistance, the re-establishment of public order, functioning public institutions, reconstruction, rehabilitation and peace building for longer-term sustainable development. A substantial civilian participation in crisis management is also essential for a strategy of military disengagement and plays a crucial role in the phase of post-conflict peace building. In this context, it is important that there is coordination between the civilian and military components in crisis management from the first phase of integrated mission planning. In addition, there should be significant coordination with actors involved in longer-term reconstruction and development, including in particular the other organs of the United Nations system in accordance with their respective mandates and the international financial institutions, as well as cooperation with the business sector.

"Ministers recognized the increasing role of some regional and sub-regional and other international organizations in crisis management. They also recalled that articles 52 and 53 of the United Nations Charter set forth the contribution of regional organizations to conflict management, as well as the relationship between the United Nations and regional organizations. They encouraged these organizations, whenever possible, to continue to develop their crisis management capabilities, including in the civilian field, in close coordination with the United Nations and in accordance with the provisions of article 54 of the United Nations Charter. When applicable, clear schemes for

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joint operations should be developed. Also, greater coordination and interoperability among those organizations, as well as developing and sharing common strategies, operational policies and best practices in civilian crisis management would enhance efficiency and coherence in crisis management. Continued internal coordination in this field among all relevant United Nations organs and agencies should also be strengthened.

"Ministers supported the efforts by Member States to continue to develop, as appropriate, their own civilian crisis management capabilities, including, inter alia, rapid civilian response teams, and they also supported their initiatives to make these capabilities available to the United Nations and other relevant regional or sub-regional organizations, as a contribution to their efforts in the maintenance of international peace and security. Adequate capabilities should be developed in key areas of civilian crisis management, such as police, justice and the rule of law, preparation of electoral processes and electoral observation, civil protection and public administration. The Security Council should consider the nature and availability of these capabilities when approving the necessary mandates for United Nations operations.

"Adequate and flexible means for transitional peace support and crisis management activities, such as protection of civilians, including United Nations and humanitarian personnel, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants, the end of impunity, public institution-building and transitional justice, as well as the promotion and protection of human rights and the integration of a gender perspective are essential to ensure lasting peace after a conflict. Also, the involvement of local actors in the policy-making process and a fruitful relationship with civil society should be among the priorities of any post-conflict strategy.

"The Security Council commends the efforts of the Secretary-General in addressing all relevant issues relating to the civilian aspects of crisis management and invites him, other institutions and agencies of the United Nations system, regional and sub-regional organizations and Member States to continue to give serious consideration to this matter, with a view to making further progress in this field."